

Introduction

Consistent shift from abuse of natural to semi-synthetic and synthetic drugs has been noticed the world over during the past decade. Among these drugs, Amphetamine type stimulants (ATS) have been growing more rapidly than any other group of drugs. These are rather easy to manufacture, if only one has access to the required precursor chemicals. Often, production centres are dispersed and located close to regions of consumption. Preventing diversion of precursors and traffickers' access to them is essential to prevent production of these drugs.

Realising the potential of 'precursor control' as a means of tackling drug problem, the international community made it an integral part of the international strategy to combat drugs. Three United Nations Conventions were signed in 1961, 1971 and 1988- the last of which dealt with precursor control in an exhaustive manner.

India is a party to all the three UN Conventions and after signing the 1988 convention, amended NDPS Act introducing precursor control. Being a new field, precursor control is not as well known as other aspects of drug law enforcement. A need was felt to increase awareness about this subject among the drug law enforcement officers, judiciary and prosecutors and provide a forum for discussing it. This workshop was organized by the Regional Precursor Control Project for SAARC Countries operating under the aegis of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime in coordination with Global Jurists' Foundation and Delhi Police with this objective in view. The workshop also aimed to provide a forum for the judges, prosecutors and enforcement officers to meet and discuss common inadequacies in investigations which result in acquittals and attempt to find solutions to these problems.

Judges, public prosecutors and police officers from the states of Uttaranchal, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Delhi participated in the workshop. Central government agencies such as Narcotics Control Bureau, Central Bureau of Narcotics, Directorate General of Revenue Intelligence and Central Bureau of Investigation also participated in the workshop.

Mr. Ashok Bhandari, Special Secretary, Home inaugurated the workshop while Justice Ashok Desai, former Chief Justice of Uttaranchal presided it over.